



Abbey Lane Primary School

Inspection report

**Better
education
and care**

Unique Reference Number 106982
Local Authority Sheffield

Inspection number 277674
Inspection dates 3–4 May 2006
Reporting inspector Ms J McKenna

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of School	Primary	School address	Abbey Lane
School category	Community		Sheffield
Age range of pupils	4–11		South Yorkshire
			S8 0BN
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0114 2745 054
Number on roll	416	Fax number	0114 2746 708
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr D Kidd
Date of previous inspection	February 2000	Headteacher	Mrs S Lee

Age group	Published	Reference no.
4–11	May 2006	277674

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Most of the pupils in this large school come from the relatively advantaged area close to it. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below that usually found. The proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is also below average. The majority of pupils are of white British heritage. Around 10% are from minority ethnic groups, most of whom speak English fluently.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Abbey Lane is a good school. Very high quality pastoral care for pupils results in outstanding personal development. Pupils' attitudes are very good and they greatly enjoy school. Behaviour is excellent. Academic provision, including in the Foundation Stage, is good. The curriculum is broad with strong enrichment, especially in the arts and sport. Pupils achieve well. They build consistently on their above average standards at entry and generally reach high standards in the Foundation Stage and throughout the rest of the school. Several years of well above average results in national tests was followed by a decline in 2005. Results were still above average but not as high as previously, mainly due to a greater than usual proportion of the pupils in the cohort having learning and personal needs. Pupils are currently making good progress across the school, helped by good teaching. However, in some lessons the level of the work and pace of learning does not ensure that all pupils make similar progress. Some aspects of assessing pupils' work are good, but systems for tracking their progress do not yet give comprehensive and easily accessible information. Leadership, management and governance are good. The headteacher provides strong and determined leadership. The school's strengths and areas requiring development are well known. Inspectors agree with most of the school's judgements about itself but judge that improvement since the last inspection has been good rather than outstanding. This justifiably highly regarded school, which provides good value for money, is well placed to build on its current success.

Grade: 2

What the school should do to improve further

The school should focus on:

- ensuring that the work provided in all lessons and the way that lessons are organised enables pupils in all classes to progress as well as they should
- improving systems for assessing pupils, tracking their progress and analysing and using the information gained.

Achievement and standards

Pupils' achievement is good. They enter the Foundation Stage with standards above those normally found and make good progress. By the end of it, most meet the learning goals set nationally for pupils of that age and many exceed them. At the end of both Key Stages 1 and 2, results in national tests and assessments are normally well above the national average. There was a decline in results for 2005, mainly because both groups of pupils, especially Year 6, had

a larger than usual proportion of children with learning or personal difficulties, which affected standards. Inspection evidence indicates that most pupils across the school currently are making good progress in their work in English, mathematics and science. The school predicts that targets set for Key Stage 1 in 2006 will not only be met but exceeded. At Key Stage 2 the targets set are challenging, higher than the 2005 results, and the school is working hard to meet them. Pupils of all ages are making better progress in writing than previously, the result of a successful focus on improving their writing skills. Although there are some variations in the rate of progress of different groups of pupils across the school, with, for example, girls sometimes doing better than boys, there is no significant and consistent difference overall.

Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being

The quality of personal development is outstanding. Pupils enjoy coming to school, where they feel safe and secure. As one pupil said, 'I love my school'. Overall, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very strong. For example, six-year-old pupils show good understanding of their feelings and how to take part in class discussions. Pupils respond very well to the many opportunities to work for the benefit of others, such as being trained to be monitors and playground friends. They develop good skills for their future by having to apply for these jobs and having their performance monitored. Pupils' attitudes are very good; they listen attentively both to teachers and to other pupils, showing very good levels of concentration. They work well together in small groups, taking pride in producing high standards of work. Behaviour in class and around the school is excellent. Attendance is very good, though marginally affected by children being taken out of school for annual holidays. Pupils know how to keep safe. Pupils understand about sensible eating and the need for exercise. They are very active at break times, making good use of the play equipment, and many take up the opportunities to be involved in sporting activities. The school council has responded well to the opportunities to discuss issues that pupils feel are important to them.

Grade: 1

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Some is very good. However, some is satisfactory and the quality across the school is not

consistent. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils. They present work clearly and in a stimulating way, making good use of resources like interactive whiteboards to make explanations more interesting. Class discussion is usually effective, with teachers asking probing questions to draw out pupils' understanding and develop it further. Pupils of all ages are keen to respond and show good levels of knowledge. These sessions are usually fast and punchy. Sometimes they are too long and this slows the pace of children's learning. Good attention overall is given to planning work, with the right degree of difficulty to enable all groups of pupils to progress well, but occasionally work is not set at the right level to challenge higher attaining pupils which limits their achievement. Teaching assistants provide effective support to the pupils they work with. The very positive attitudes and behaviour of pupils from Reception upwards makes a significant contribution to their good learning. In almost all cases, pupils work hard and are keen to do well.

Clear guidance is given to pupils on how to improve their work in class and how to achieve their targets. The marking of pupils' work, particularly their writing, is generally informative and helpful but is not fully consistent.

Grade: 2

Curriculum and other activities

The curriculum is good, and it meets the needs of all groups of pupils. It provides a secure grounding for the teaching of literacy and numeracy for pupils from the Foundation Stage onwards, and these skills are also promoted well in other subjects. There have been substantial developments in provision for information and communication technology (ICT) recently which have impacted positively on children's understanding of computing, although older pupils have not yet covered all areas of the subject sufficiently. Provision for the arts is a real strength of the school and the school has recently gained Artsmark at gold standard. Participation in the 2005 Sheffield Arts festival provided very positive opportunities for pupils to develop their artistic skills as well as their performance skills in dance, drama and music. There is a very strong range of enrichment activities, which includes modern foreign language and a variety and quality in sports. A good range of trips is provided which enhance pupils' enjoyment of school.

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support

The school takes outstanding care of its pupils. Both the personal and academic needs of pupils are considered important. New pupils to the school say they were very well looked after when they arrived. Those with learning difficulties or disabilities are given good support. Pupils' needs are carefully assessed

leading to appropriate provision, including access to a mentor or counselling where necessary. As one parent wrote, 'The behaviour of my child has tested the patience of a saint...he has received the help to improve'. The support provided for pupils with muscle control difficulties is recognised within the city for its excellence. There are good procedures for ensuring child protection and the safety of pupils; risk assessments are carried out diligently. There are systems for tracking pupils' progress but they are not comprehensive enough to allow senior managers to easily draw together relevant whole school data and to analyse strengths and weaknesses in achievement in sufficient depth.

Grade: 2

Leadership and management

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides clear direction and is determined and persistent in her approach to improving the school. Management, for example of literacy and numeracy, is through teams which results in a large number of staff being involved in developments and in monitoring the effectiveness of provision – this is developing their skills effectively. The school's self-evaluation is largely accurate. Strengths and areas requiring improvement, such as assessment systems, are well known. Action to tackle weaknesses is focused and effective, as seen in recent successes in developing ICT. The senior leadership team is outward looking. The working partnership with other organisations is good and several staff have received external recognition of their expertise. Parents' views are welcomed and they hold the school in very high regard. Governance is strong and has a positive impact. The chair in particular is knowledgeable and plays an active and constructive part in both supporting and challenging the school. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. With the new leadership structure and management systems in place, the school is well placed to improve further. To realise this potential, greater consistency in the quality of teaching needs to be secured.

Grade: 2

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate.</i>	School Overall	16–19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	
The <i>standards</i> ¹ reached by learners	2	
How well learners make <i>progress</i> , taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2	

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	
The behaviour of learners	1	
The attendance of learners	2	
How well learners enjoy their education	1	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	2	
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	

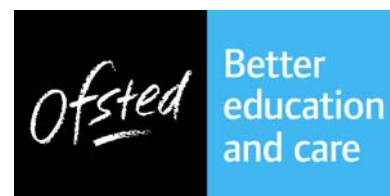
¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	
Does this school require special measures?	No	
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No	

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe.	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in Key Stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	N/A
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	N/A

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The School Council
Abbey Lane Primary School
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S8 0BN

5 May 2006

Dear Pupils

Thank you for being so friendly and making us feel welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you and watching you learn very much.

What we liked most about your school

- You enjoy school very much and are enthusiastic about all it offers you.
- Your behaviour is excellent.
- You get on very well with each other and play and work together nicely.
- The adults in your school care for you extremely well and you help to care for each other.
- You try hard to do what your teachers ask in lessons. This helps you learn.
- The school provides a lot of interesting activities for you.
- The headteacher and other staff are working hard to make your school even better.

What we have asked the school to do to make it an even better place for you to learn

- Make all of your lessons as good as the very best ones.
- Improve the way teachers measure and record how well you are doing so that it gives them as much information as possible about the progress you are making.

You can help your teachers by continuing to work hard and listening carefully when they are talking to you. We hope that you continue to be happy at school.

Best wishes

Ms McKenna and the other inspectors